

Constraints to Administrative Leadership Role of Secondary School Principals in Owerri Education Zone of Imo State

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to investigate through survey, the constraints to administrative roles of principals in Owerri Education Zone. A 25-item questionnaire gained information on financial, physical and equipment constraints and staff personnel administration constraints to administrative leadership roles of the principals. A mean of 2.50 indicated the acceptance of an item as a constraint. 50% of the total number of principals in the zone was sampled using proportionate purposive sampling technique. Cronbach Alpha was used to determine the internal reliability of the instrument. The result showed among others; inadequate funds to procure facilities and equipment, inadequate funds for organizing seminars and workshops, poor condition of service for teachers, insufficient vehicles for supervisory, duties and other administrative duties, poor teacher development plan and no criteria for positing newly recruited teachers, as constraints to the administrative leadership roles of the principals. The implications of the findings and recommendations were made.

Introduction

One of the primary objectives of administration in any organization is coordinating the efforts of people towards the achievement of the goals of that organization. In school administration, the primary aim is to improve teaching and learning.

The federal ministry of education in the National Policy on Education 1977 (revised, 1981, 1998 and 2004), introduced the 6-3-3-4 system of education. This new system of education emphasized the school administrator's role in relation to teachers and students development. Our attempt to universalize primary education under UPE in 1955 and 1976 and the UBE scheme introduced in 1999 boosted enrolments in primary and secondary schools. Nwagwu (2002), observed that while the total number of secondary school population was 4.2 million in 1996/97, the population for the JSS classes alone in 2000/2001 was about 6.9 million. Therefore, total number of children in Nigerian primary and secondary schools in 2002/ 2003 academic year was about 27 million (Nwagwu, 2002)

For this magnitude of expansion, there must be massive investment of funds and facilities for secondary schools principals to enable them perform their administrative duties. Nwagwu (2002) noted that the serious shortfall and inadequacies in education funding manifest in overcrowded classrooms, lack of facilities and equipment. Ill-equipped workshops, libraries and laboratories where they exist at all, which combine to frustrate teaching and learning.

The Federal ministry of Education (1998), stated that Education has become for this country, an instrument par excellence for effective national development. It is a subject of importance in the field of educational administration since education in Nigeria is neither sole private nor a public venture. In the secondary school educational system the principal is the instructional leader who has the facility to see his task clearly and works towards its accomplishment with decisiveness and efficiency.

Ukeje, Akabogu and Ndu (1992: 331) described leadership as the behavior of an individual that directs and guides others towards goal achievement. It involves the interpersonal influence as that individual initiates structures and acts in a consistent pattern of group interaction aimed at productivity and individual fulfillment. Such good leadership requires effective administration of schools at all levels as an instrument for optimal educational development. The administration of secondary schools consists the management of resources such as manpower finance and capital equipment for optimum benefit of the school.

Statement of the Problem

In many Owerri Education Zone, there has been a number of problems confronting secondary school education. This becomes obvious when one looks at the rate of performance of students in both the external and internal examinations, the way principals communicate with staff and students, and the way they exhibit professional knowledge regarding the overall job of improving instruction. All these affect their administrative ability and make it impossible for the principals to create a conducive atmosphere for improved performance on the part of teachers and students.

The incidence of administrative lapses could be attributed to deficiency in the leadership roles of the principals. These lapses have been symptomized by staff redundancies, overt lateness among teachers and students, general truancy and dwindling rate of academic achievement among secondary school students. This

situation coupled with the poor environment in which some secondary school teachers and students work, tend to generate doubts on why the principals fail to perform adequately their administrative leadership roles.

The inability of these principals to demonstrate adequate administrative leadership qualities inspite of the knowledge they possess could thus be as a result of some hindrances on their way of success. Against this background therefore, what are the constraints to administrative leadership roles of the secondary school principals in Owerri education zone? Deriving from this, the following research questions guided the study.

- (1) What are the financial constraints to the Administrative leadership role of secondary school principals?
- (2) What are the physical facilities and equipment constraint to the administrative leadership role of secondary school principals?
- (3) How does staff personnel administration constitute a constraint to the administrative leadership role of the principal?

Hypotheses

To carry out this study, two null hypotheses have been formulated at 0.05 level of significance.

- (1) The mean perception of principals on financial constraints as a factor on their leadership role is not significantly dependent on their gender.
- (2) The mean perception of principals on physical facilities equipment constraints as a factor of on their leadership role is not significantly dependent on their gender.

Research Methodology

The design of the study is survey. It is essentially designed to elicit information from principals on the constraints to their administrative leadership roles in Owerri zone. The area of the study is Owerri Education zone of Imo state.

The population of the study comprised the 128 school principals in Owerri education zone, who occupy the leadership roles . The study covered both male and female principals within the specified area.

The sample size consists of 50% of the total number of principals in the seven local government area that make up the zone. This gives a total of 64 principals (24 males and 40 females), selected through a proportionate sampling technique.

The instrument for data collection is questionnaire structured on the Likert four-point scale, Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The questionnaire reflected the three major constraints on the administrative leadership role of secondary school principals.

The instrument was face-validated using three experts in both Educational Administration and planning and Measurement and Evaluation from university of Nigeria, Nsukka.

The reliability of the instrument was determined through a measure of internal consistency of the items. While Cronbach Alpha was used to determine the internal reliability of the instrument

Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Any item above the mean rating of 2.50 is in agreement while any item below the mean rating of 2.50 is an indication of a disagreement.

Results

Table 1: Mean Ratings of male and female principals on finance as a constraint to the administrative leadership role of principals

S/N	Items	Male Principals \bar{X}	Decision	Female Principals \bar{X}	Decision
1	Lack of funds to procure facilities and equipment	2.61	Accepted	2.93	Accepted
2	Lack of funds for organizing seminars and workshops for secondary school teachers.	3.05	Accepted	3.40	Accepted
3	Poor remuneration for teachers	3.41	Accepted	3.21	Accepted
4	Irregular payment of teacher's salaries	3.10	Accepted	3.03	Accepted
5	Inadequate funds for regular staff development	2.83	Accepted	2.91	Accepted
6	Inadequate funds to carry out supervisory programme	2.57	Accepted	2.73	Accepted
Grand \bar{X} Score		2.89		3.03	

The grand mean scores of 2.89 and 3.03 for males and females respectively showed that finance is a constraint to their leadership roles. The mean responses of 3.41, 3.10, 2.61, 3.05, 2.83, and 2.57 for male principals and 3.21, 3.03, 2.93, 3.40, 2.91, and 2.73 for female principals, indicated inadequate finance is a constraint to administrative leadership roles of principals. Thus, poor and irregular remuneration for teachers,

inadequate funds to procure facilities and equipment, inadequate funds for organizing seminars, workshops and in-service programmes as well as inadequate funds to carry out supervision continue to impede administrative roles of principals.

Table 2: Mean ratings of male and female principals on physical facilities and equipment as constraint to the administrative leadership role.

S/N	Items	Male Principals \bar{X}	Decision	Female Principals \bar{X}	Decision
	Absence of adequate syllabus for teaching	2.43	Rejected	2.15	Rejected
	Lack of recreational facilities in schools	3.31	Accepted	3.63	Accepted
	Inadequate office accommodation for staff and students.	3.37	Accepted	3.11	Accepted
	Inadequate instructional materials like biros, dusters, chalks. etc.	2.07	Rejected	2.44	Rejected
	Inadequate library facilities for staff and students	3.16	Accepted	3.33	Accepted
	Inadequate stationery to disseminate information to staff and students	1.42	Rejected	2.00	Rejected
	Lack of transport facilities for staff and students	3.03	Accepted	3.30	Accepted
	Inadequate typewriters and	2.40	Rejected	2.28	Rejected
	Grand \bar{X} Score	2.64	Rejected	2.28	Rejected

From Table 2, a grand x score of 2.64 and 2.70 for male and female principals show respectively both facilities and equipment as constraints of administrative leadership roles of the principals,

For males, the highest mean score was recorded in item 3 (inadequate office accommodation for staff and students) whereas the least mean score of 1.42 was scored in inadequate stationery to disseminate information to staff and students. For females the highest mean score of 3.63 was recorded on lack of recreational facilities in schools whereas, the least X score of 2.00 was recorded on inadequate stationery to disseminate information to staff and student as well.

Table 3: Mean Ratings of male and female principals on staff personnel Administrative as a constraint to Administrative leadership role

S/N	Items	Male Principals \bar{X}	Decision	Female Principals \bar{X}	Decision
	Shortage of qualified personnel	2.33	Rejected	2.04	Rejected
	Lack of clear-cut policies on recruitment	2.26	Rejected	2.19	Rejected
	Staff over load due to insufficient number of staff	2.22	Rejected	2.18	Rejected
	Recruitment of staff not widely publicized	1.67	Rejected	1.99	Rejected
	Lack of staff development programme	2.64	Accepted	2.81	Accepted
	Poor condition of service for teachers	3.55	Accepted	3.25	Accepted
	Insufficient vehicles for supervisory duties and other administrative duties	3.71	Rejected	3.50	Rejected
	Interference of the Education Management Board in the discipline of teachers	2.08	Accepted	2.16	Accepted
	Arbitrary transfer of teachers	3.46	Rejected	3.16	Rejected
	No criteria for posting newly recruited teachers	3.58	Accepted	3.47	Accepted
	Conflict between secondary school principals and State Education Commission	2.41	Rejected	2.19	Rejected
	Grand X Score	2.71		2.63	

Table 3 above presents the opinions of male and female principals on the constraints to the administrative leadership role in staff personnel administration.

The Table shows that grand X scores of 2.71 and 2.63 for male and female principals respectively. This indicated staff personnel administration as a constraint to their administrative leadership role.

Male principals recorded the highest mean score in item 7 (insufficient vehicles for supervisory duties and other administrative duties) whereas, the least mean score of 1.67 was scored on item 4 recruitment of staff not being widely publicized. For females, the highest mean score of 3.50 was recorded on item 7 the least score of 1.99 was also recorded on item 4 dealing with Recruitment of staff not being widely publicized. It was also under this item that the males recorded the least mean score (1.67) as well.

Table 4: t-test Analysis of the Difference between the mean scores of male and female principals with regard to financial constraint to administrative leadership role.

Group	Number (N)	Mean \bar{X}	SD	df	Level of Significance	Cal t	Critical t	Decision
Female Principals	40	3.04	0.678	62	.05	0.55	1.96	Rejected
Male Principals	24	2.93	0.82					

Table 4 presents the t-test analysis of the difference between the mean scores of male and female principals with regard to the effect of financial constraints to administrative leadership role of principal in secondary schools in Owerri Education Zone . From the table, the calculated t value is 0.55 at 62 degrees of freedom at .05 level of significance. Since this calculated t-value of 0.55 is less than the table value of 1.96, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the opinions of male and female principals with regard to the financial constraints to administrative leadership role of principals in Owerri Education Zone.

Table 5: t-test Analysis of the difference between the mean scores of male and female principals with regard to the constraints of physical facilities and equipment to Administrative leadership Role

Group	Number (N)	Mean \bar{X}	SD	df	Level of Significance	Cal t	Critical t	Decision
Female Principals	40	2.65	0.94	62	.05	0.62	1.96	Rejected
Male Principals	24	2.78	0.75					

Table 5 presents the t-test analysis of the difference between the mean scores of male and female principals with regard to the ways in which physical facilities and equipment constraint to administrative leadership roles of principals in Owerri Education Zone . As can be seen from the table, the calculated t-value at 62 degrees of freedom and .05 level of significance is (0.62) since this calculated t-value of 0.62 is less than the Table t-value of 1.96, the null hypothesis is accepted. In other words, there is no significant difference between the opinions of male and female principals with regard to the physical facilities and equipment as constraints to the administrative leadership roles of principals in Owerri Education Zone.

Discussion

The analysis of the data showed that with Grand mean scores of 2.89 and 3.03 for males and females respectively, both male and female principals indicated that finance is a constraint to effective and efficient performance of their administrative leadership role as it accounts for poor and irregular remuneration for teachers, inadequate funds to procure facilities and equipment, inadequate funds for organizing seminars and workshops and lack of funds to carry out supervision programmes; and their adverse effects on the principals leadership roles. This findings conform with the views of Ukeje (1982) and Ogbonnaya (1997) who noted the hindrances of financial constraints in the implementation of educational programmes in Nigeria with particular effect on the principals in their leadership roles.

In answer to research Question two, the Grand mean scores of male and female principals were 2.64 and 2.70 respectively. With these, both principals accept lack of inadequate facilities as a constraint to their administrative leadership role. For males, the highest mean score was recorded in item 3 (inadequate office accommodation for staff and students), whereas the least mean score of 1.42 was on inadequate stationery to disseminate information to staff and students. For females, the highest mean score of 3.63 was recorded on lack of recreational facilities in schools whereas, the least mean score of 2.00 was recorded also on inadequate stationery to disseminate information to staff and students as in males. Nwagwu (1983) stated that one of the very important factors in any attempt to balance the qualitative and the quantitative growth of any educational system is the quality and number of infrastructure in the form of buildings, facilities, machinery and equipment. Ehiemetalor (2001:305) similarly affirmed that school facilities are the operational inputs in every instructional

programme and success of any administrator. Earlier on, Osadolor (2000) writing on the dearth of facilities in schools, had noted that the priority attention education demands is not reflected in the budget for facilities management.

In respect of Research Question three, the analysis of data, showed that the Grand mean scores of 2.71 and 2.63 for males and female principals respectively. Male principals recorded the highest mean score on item 7 (insufficient vehicles for supervisory duties and other administrative duties); whereas, the least mean score of 1.67 was scored on item 4. (Recruitment of staff not widely publicized). For females, the highest mean score of 3.50 was recorded on the same item 7 as the males whereas the least mean score of 1.99 was also recorded on item 4. In the principals opinion therefore, the constraints to the administrative leadership role of secondary school principals in Owerri education zone include lack of training opportunities for principals and teachers and poor condition of service for teachers, among others. This was earlier established by Ejiogu (2003) who observed that the Nigerian educational system is characterized by absence of meaningful staff development programmes. These have affected the principals effective and efficient performance of their duties.

The t-test analysis of the difference between the mean scores male and female principals on the financial and physical facilities are equipment constraints to administrative leadership roles were accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference in the opinions of both principals, as both sexes hold the same opinion of constraints to the role performance of the principals.

The inadequate physical facilities and the equipment in the schools will hinder the effective and efficient administration of the schools as both teachers and the students will be handicapped without these facilities which in turn impair effective teaching and learning.

Recommendations

Deriving from the findings and analysis, it was pertinent to recommend that:

- (1) There is the need for the state government to provide insufficient funds to the principals to enable them perform the administrative roles in the schools. Such funds provided, should be monitored disbursed, judiciously used and carefully monitored.
- (2) There is the need for the Post Primary School Management Board of Owerri Education Zone to organize seminars and workshops for principals and teachers. Such workshops and seminars should be given by experts who are current in schools administration,
- (3) There is the need for the state government to improve the conditions of service of principals and teachers. Recruitment of staff should be widely publicized to enable the Post Primary School Management Board to select competent and well qualified teachers. Government should also pay salary regularly to avoid distracting principals from their administrative duties. Such distractions could hamper the effective performance of the principals.
- (4) Imo State Post Primary School Management Board should provide secondary school principals with the necessary infrastructural facilities, equipment and materials for effective performance of their duties.

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